



Parliament of Australia

Hon Tony Smith MP
Speaker of the House of Representatives

Senator the Hon Scott Ryan
President of the Senate

21 August 2020

COVID-19: Statement by the Presiding Officers – wearing of masks for the period 24 August 2020 to 3 September 2020

Over the last 6 months Australian Parliament House has applied multiple control measures to manage the increased risk of exposure to COVID-19. However, since the last sitting of the Parliament in June, there has been a significant change in relation to the transmission of COVID-19 predominantly from overseas transmission to significant community transmission.

Following further discussions with the Office of the Chief Medical Officer and the Parliamentary Departments, the following advice is provided for building occupants and those visiting Parliament House (APH) during the next sitting fortnight.

While recognising that the wearing of masks is not mandatory in the ACT, at the specific request of the Acting Chief Medical Officer and out of an abundance of caution, in the public common areas of Australian Parliament House everyone is recommended to wear a mask at all times.

As an additional precaution the wearing of masks is encouraged in the presence of others, especially where physical distancing is not possible, and by those at increased risk of COVID-19.

If infected, the wearing of masks reduces the chance of unknowingly passing on COVID-19 to others, with masks also playing a role in protecting people who are not infected.

It is important to use and wear masks properly:

- wash or sanitise your hands before putting it on or taking it off;
- make sure the mask covers your nose and mouth and fits snugly under your chin, over the bridge of your nose and against the sides of your face;
- do not touch the front of your mask while wearing or removing it;
- do not allow the mask to hang around your neck or under your nose;
- do not reuse single use masks; wash and dry reusable masks after use and store in a clean dry place.

A link to how to use a mask correctly can be found [here](#).

Used single use masks must be disposed of in designated bins.

This measure is in addition to the range of control measures to manage the risk of COVID-19 exposure to Senators, Members and building occupants that have already been put in place.

The Department of Parliamentary Services will continue to provide updates regarding the operations of Parliament House to building occupants. Please see link [here](#) to COVID-19: Statement by the Presiding Officers issued on 17 August 2020.